

REMARKS

This application has been reviewed in light of the Office Action dated November 2, 2005. Claims 1-5, 7, 8, 10, 32-36, 38, 39, 41-46, 48, 49, 51 and 52 are presented for examination. Claims 1, 4, 5, 7, 8, 32, 35, 36, 38, 39, 42, 45, 46, 48, 49 and 52 have been amended to define more clearly what Applicants regard as their invention. Claims 6, 9, 37, 40, 47 and 50 have been canceled without prejudice or disclaimer of subject matter, and will not be mentioned further. Claims 1, 32, 42 and 52 are in independent form. Favorable reconsideration is requested.

Claims 1, 2, 4, 5, 8, 10, 32, 33, 35, 36, 39, 41-43, 45, 46, 49, 51 and 52 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being obvious from U.S. Patent 6,757,826 (*Paltenghe*) in view of U.S. Patent 6,209,102 (*Hoover*). Claims 3, 34 and 44 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being obvious from *Paltenghe* and *Hoover* in view of U.S. Patent 6,148,093 (McConnell et al.). Claims 7, 38 and 48 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being obvious from *Paltenghe* and *Hoover* in view of U.S. Patent 5,650,943 (*Powell et al.*).

As is described in the Amendment filed February 17, 2005, the present invention provides a system by means of which certain problems commonly encountered in computer security can be overcome. Such problems include the forgetfulness of users, and their consequent tendency to use passwords that are too easy for an unauthorized person to guess. The approach to which the present invention relates is one in which a user provides, not an ordinary password as such, but a sample of handwriting that can be compared to a registered sample to determine whether the user is authorized to access the computer or network, or not.

More specifically, independent Claim 1 is directed to a signature processing

method for displaying a signature on a display unit. That method comprises inputting a signature on the display unit, the signature being handwritten by a user via a digitizer, and being composed of at least one stroke. Then, in a control step, the inputted stroke of the signature and a background pattern are displayed on the display unit. Claim 1 recites that the background pattern is a pattern which makes it difficult for others to discern the stroke of the signature as the stroke is being inputted via the digitizer, while yet allowing the user to discern the stroke of the signature as the stroke is being inputted via the digitizer.

As pointed out in the Amendment filed February 17, 2005, *Paltenghe* relates to a system that utilizes a signature in lieu of a password. As the Office Action correctly concedes, however, that patent does not teach or suggest displaying a signature being inputted via a digitizer on a display unit in a manner that makes it difficult for others to discern the stroke of the signature, as claimed in Claim 1.

In the *Paltenghe* apparatus, as described at col. 8, lines 22-26, the pattern of strokes will be unique for each transaction in Fig. 1; as far as Applicants can see, however, nothing in that patent discloses in what pattern the background pattern is displayed.

Hoover, as described in the Amendment filed February 17, 2005, relates to a system in which the user obtains access by inputting a password or PIN, and has the option of inputting the PIN or password using a mode in which a plurality of user-selectable fields, the displayed contents of which are in random order, and the proper values in which are selected by the user. For example, if a six-digit PIN is to be entered, six columns of digits may be displayed, with the digits in a different order in each, and the user selects the first digit of the PIN from the first column, the second from the second column, etc. Because the order of the numbers is different, and in fact is random (or the equivalent), in

each column, a near-by person is at least hindered from seeing what numbers are being inputted.

Hoover uses a bingo card as shown in Fig. 1 and “+” or “-” buttons as shown in Fig. 2 in an attempt to prevent an attacker from determining an access code by using histories of, for example, keyboard arrow key or mouse click selections. From col. 2, line 64 to col. 3, line 10, *Hoover* describes darkening a particular user selectable field so that its value is not visible except when the mouse or cursor is over that field, and also refers to replacing fields with asterisks except for the one being instantaneously inputted. However, because the field which is being instantaneously inputted remains visible, the *Hoover* method inadvertently can allow an attacker to discern the field (its contents) being instantaneously inputted.

Applicants submit that nothing in *Hoover* describes in what pattern the background pattern is displayed, but only describes the random display of a keypad.

Since neither of these patents discloses the background displayed, Applicants submit that, even if *Paltenghe* and *Hoover* were to be combined in the manner proposed in the Office Action (which, in any event, Applicants do not admit would have been obvious or technically feasible), the resulting combination still would not have the feature recited in Claim 1 of a control step of displaying a signature being inputted via a digitizer on a display unit, and displaying along with the signature a background that makes it difficult for others to discern the stroke of the signature as the stroke is being inputted via the digitizer in the inputting of the signature, while yet allowing the user to discern the stroke of the signature as the stroke is inputted via the digitizer in the inputting. Indeed, the result of any such combination would apparently be a system where the field in which a digital signature is being instantaneously inputted is identifiably displayed without

concealment during the inputting, even though fields that were already populated may be dark or invisible. Consequently, a near-by person close enough seemingly would have an opportunity in which to readily discern the signature if made in the ordinary fashion during the inputting. This would not be secure, and would not in any way approach the result provided by Applicants, and recited in Claim 1.

Furthermore, *Paltenghe* is not understood by Applicants to be concerned with a need to provide security against enabling an unwanted viewer to discern a displayed signature during inputting, as is Applicant's invention, and thus there would have been no reason why one skilled in the art, who was confronted with the same problem as was faced by Applicants at the time of their invention, would have even consulted *Paltenghe*, let alone been motivated to combine that reference with *Hoover* in the manner proposed in the Office Action.

For all these reasons, Claim 1 believed to be clearly allowable over *Paltenghe* and *Hoover*, whether taken separately or in any possible combination (assuming such combination would even be possible, much less a permissible one).

Independent Claims 32, 42 and 52 are respectively an apparatus, program or medium claim corresponding to method Claim 1, and are deemed allowable over the art discussed above by virtue of at least the arguments presented above with regard to Claim 1.

A review of the other art of record, including *McConnell* and *Powell*, has failed to reveal anything which, in Applicants' opinion, would remedy the deficiencies of the art discussed above, as references against the above-discussed claims. Those claims are therefore believed patentable over the art of record.

The other claims in this application are each dependent from one or another of the claims discussed above and are therefore believed patentable for the same reasons as

are those claims. Since each of these other dependent claims is also deemed to define an additional aspect of the invention, however, the individual reconsideration of the patentability of each on its own merits is respectfully requested.

In view of the foregoing amendments and remarks, Applicants respectfully request favorable reconsideration and allowance of the present application.

Applicants' undersigned attorney may be reached in our New York Office by telephone at (212) 218-2100. All correspondence should continue to be directed to our address listed below.

Respectfully submitted,



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